

IOWA ARTIST **Fred Easker**  
TITLE **Inspiring Landscapes**  
GRADE LEVEL  
**Elementary | Middle | High School**

These lesson plans are designed for art educators to adapt to the needs of their individual classes.

#### INFLUENTIAL ARTISTS

Frederic Church  
John Frederick Kensett

#### MATERIALS

Paints of choice and paint supplies  
Images of Mr. Easker's work  
Landscape photographs or clips from magazines  
Optional: cameras for students to take photographs



Iowa artist Fred Easker  
**Landscape painting**

## LESSON PLAN: ELEMENTARY | MIDDLE | HIGH SCHOOL **Fred Easker**

#### OVERVIEW

Fred Easker is inspired by the Iowa landscape and believes you can find art where you are. Mr. Easker travels the Iowa countryside in search of landscapes that provide beauty, aesthetic quality and inspiration. He photographs these sites to use as a guide as he creates his paintings. In this lesson students will choose a photograph to use in creating a work of art.

Preview Fred Easker's **Biography**, **Video Synopsis**, **Video** and **Images** of his work on the Iowa Arts Council web site [www.iowaartscouncil.org/](http://www.iowaartscouncil.org/) and select resources appropriate for your adaptation of this lesson. Have students locate the artist's place of residence on an Iowa map.

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What inspires and influences Iowa artist Fred Easker?
- How does Iowa artist Fred Easker inspire you?
- What else inspires and influences you and your artwork?

#### INTRODUCTION

Begin by referring back to the introductory lesson of the Influence and Inspiration series, discussing what inspires the students as artists and individuals. Iowa artist Fred Easker believes that, as writers should write what they know, artists should find art where they are. Share visual images of Mr. Easker's work and discuss where the images come from and why. Show the video on Fred Easker. Ask students to watch for what inspires Mr. Easker and what inspires them about his work.

#### INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- use paints in creating a landscape painting
- define terms foreground, middle ground, background
- compare and contrast oil/acrylic/tempera paints
- explore the benefits, challenges and use of oil paint
- use Mr. Easker's work to identify the tools of value/tone and form
- connect the artist within to Mr. Easker's life and work

#### PROCEDURES

1. Provide images of Mr. Easker's work. Reflect about the works and discuss what influences and inspires Mr. Easker: Hudson River School, Frederic Church, John Frederick Kensett and the Iowa landscape. Refer to the information provided in Mr. Easker's biography.
2. Discuss form, tone and value as well as zones of recession and techniques used to separate the zones.
3. Demonstrate painting techniques to highlight form, tone, value, scale and overlapping. Lead a discussion comparing and contrasting students' experiences with watercolor, tempera, oil paints and acrylic.
4. Ask students to imagine a landscape that would inspire them. Visualize this landscape, the lighting and the environment.
5. Provide a variety of photographs of landscapes for students to peruse. Have students choose a landscape that represents a scene inspiring to them. Alternatively, provide students with time to gather or produce photographic images that are inspiring to them.

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IOWA'S  
CULTURAL  
+  
ARTISTIC  
LEGACY  
EVOLVES

Influence + Inspiration

LESSON PLAN: ELEMENTARY | MIDDLE | HIGH SCHOOL  
**Fred Easker**



6. Using the photographs as a guide, provide students time to create a painting from their photograph.
7. Discuss and reflect upon techniques, inspiration, influences and connections to careers throughout the process.

## RESOURCES

### Internet

[www.smithsonianeducation.org/educators/lesson\\_plans/landscape\\_painting/index.html](http://www.smithsonianeducation.org/educators/lesson_plans/landscape_painting/index.html)

Oil painting tips, work by oil painters and additional lesson plans

[xroads.virginia.edu/~MA98/haven/wood/home.html](http://xroads.virginia.edu/~MA98/haven/wood/home.html)

Provides biographical information and a gallery of paintings

[en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Landscape\\_art](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Landscape_art)

Examples and the definition of landscape art

[www.bigblackpig.com/painting/lessonalpha.html](http://www.bigblackpig.com/painting/lessonalpha.html)

Painting instructions, tips and techniques

[painting.about.com/od/landscapes/Landscape\\_Painting.htm](http://painting.about.com/od/landscapes/Landscape_Painting.htm)

Tips for aiding in landscaping painting

### Images

[www.easkerart.com/](http://www.easkerart.com/)

Mr. Easker's web page offering images of his work

[www.grafphoto.com/](http://www.grafphoto.com/)

Gallery of nature art images

### Literature

*The Usborne Book of Art Skills* by Fiona Watt

*Grant Wood: The Artist in the Hayloft* by Deba Foxley Leach

*Artist in Overalls: The Life of Grant Wood* by John Duggleby

## National Standards | Iowa Standards

1. Understanding and applying media, techniques, and processes
2. Using knowledge of structures and functions
3. Choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter, symbols and ideas
4. Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures
5. Reflecting upon and assessing the characteristics and merits of their work and the work of others
6. Making connections between visual arts and other disciplines